

Edmonton Daily Bulletin

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MONDAY, APRIL 26, 1909.

THE SLUM PROBLEM.

Edmonton—like western cities generally—is yet at the beginning of things. It has therefore the opportunity to steer clear of tendencies in other growth that have been found elsewhere, to produce conditions of life neither necessary nor desirable conditions—dealt altogether and absolutely undesirable, and probably too—when compared at the present time with the welfare they are viewed. The more confident the people of Edmonton are that Edmonton will one day be a Toronto or a Montreal in population, wealth and commerce the more anxious they should be that the city too should not be a slum. Toronto and Montreal in every aspect.

No problem is more inconstant, or more puzzling in the larger and older cities than that of the slums—the disease where people like rabbits in a burrow under conditions where cleanliness is impossible and disease inevitable. But the problem once it becomes a problem, is all but if not altogether incapable of solution. Toronto, Montreal and New York would not have their slums, if they did not do so, we are told, for the excellent reason that it is almost if not quite beyond the possibilities of even large and wealthy corporations to rid themselves of this cancer once its roots have set firmly in the soil.

What these great cities cannot do Edmonton and the younger cities in the west which hope some day to become as great, should avoid having to try, or do, or have to, to any extent, to combat the disease. It is to the task of slums in a western city that we must talk of the future—but that is only another way of saying that we have time to take matters in hand and restrain the tendency which in its ripened form would result from which these older cities suffer and suffer all but hopelessly.

The slum is the product of greed and poverty. In the younger days of the slum-cursed city some landlord whose instincts ran altogether to the accumulation of wealth rather than property with houses built as cheaply as they could be built and crowded as thickly as they could stand, or with tenements built with no consideration whatever for the admission of fresh air and sunlight. His purpose was always to get as much as he could out of the property. Poverty forces people to accept these dives and dungeons as homes, to live in them and rear their children there. The result is the slum.

Edmonton is not able to abolish poverty but Edmonton can prevent poverty playing on the poor. It has done elsewhere by the production of the slum.

Edmonton is fortunate in that it retains the spirit of pioneerism and that a street railway system was established at an early stage of its development. These working together should tend, and are tending, to scatter settlement rather than to congeal in to a fairly dense population in one section of the city in a sunning population in a small area. To that end the extension of the street railway should be made to conduct. Extensions should proceed rather than follow settlement in the unoccupied sections of the city. Given facilities for carrying out that scheme, the larger area the population can be spread over the better for the individual physical, mentally and morally, and hence the better for the city.

But it is not reasonable to suppose that these factors alone would counteract the forces which have created slums elsewhere. Edmonton property-holders want to make money as property-holders do elsewhere. Property in some sections of the city is in demand, residential property in others. The two conditions taken together offer the opportunity for slum-making. It is becoming more and more profitable, and will become more and more profitable in future, to crowd as many shacks as possible on property located in certain districts. No one need imagine that these temptations will go unnoticed if measures are not taken to remove them.

The next step is by general pressure to the city board of trustees. It is to be hoped that those who have the power necessary to really prevent the unhealthy lines of growth that have been attained in older cities and for which those cities are now pay-

ing the penalty. It seems a reasonable contention that in a country where land has been given away—where it is given away—not more than one occupied dwelling should be allowed on a city lot. The tenement as distinguished from the terrace house is a vice that must be checked and treated accordingly. Buildings designed for residential purposes should be made to provide for fresh air and sunshine just as certainly as they should be made to comply with the health regulations. Some cities have allowed it to be built without a certain yard-space allowed for air circulation. Every room and apartment house should be subject to inspection and allowed to house only the proper number of people up to the limit of the size of the rooms. The building inspector working in conjunction with the medical health department, would be equipped to cut off in the flower of its youth the tendency toward concentration.

These radical proposals, perhaps, but they are more radical than the situation calls for. Better radical measures than epidemics. It will be objected that these proposed measures of the general health of the people are to do with the likes with his own. Unhappily, but the owner does not do what he likes with his own now by any manner of means, in this or any other city, save maybe Constantinople.

The city's interest in the housing question is not to be measured by the financial loss at stake. Skin disease and the expense of fighting an epidemic falls on the city. On this ground alone the city must be supposed to have a right to safeguard itself against any tendency to spread such a disease as the case may be.

It is a common saying that the foundation of the state is the home. It is equally true that the determining factor in a city is the home—not the home of the wealthy, but the home of the poor, the working, but the individual, and the common man. The population composed of properly housed families a city will be healthy, moral, advanced in public opinion and progressive. Given a population composed in large measure of families who have been born and brought up in the city, it cannot be expected to be healthy, moral, enlightened public sentiment progressive. The conditions of the citizen are reflected in the character of the city; just as truly as the character of the city affects the conditions of the citizen.

A Friend of the Rutherfordians, Edmonton, April 24.

hundred million dollars. The tariff has been revised in favor of bettering things but the degree of betterment does not promise to meet the case and the alternative is to spend less for the public or to take more from the public. Direct taxation is the only way to meet the situation in the Republic. Having wished high protection Uncle Sam should be allowed to find with the offering, but he does not seem to take to it with affection. He even shows signs of abandoning the mother in the hope of getting rid of the child.

CORRESPONDENCE

CATHOLIC GREEK RUTHERFURTHIAN PARISHES.

Sir:—In the last session of the Provincial Legislature, His Lordship the Bishop of St. Albert, succeeded in introducing in the Ordinances authorizing the creation of parishes or parishes in this diocese, some amendments which are intended to give the parishes or missions of the Greek-Ruthenian or other oriental church the same status as the parishes or missions of the Latin church, in rate, but adhering to the church of Rome. The corporate name shall be changed, for instance, to the Catholic parish or mission of St. Basil the Great, or Greek-Ruthenian parish (or other title, as the case may be) but united to Rome.

It is the present opinion of the Greek-Ruthenian church of this diocese that the case may be that a number of the Greek-Ruthenian parishes of the diocese, if not all, should be organized for this province, by the Holy See, and separated from the Latin church, and distinct control and management of their respective parishes and missions. The Latin church, however, is not in agreement with this proposal, and the former was abrogated.

At the time Canadians heard that the cutting off of their most direct supply of coal from the United States, the situation was harmful, and it had something to do with the migration of some of the best coal in the United States, instead of sending hay and grain across the Great Lakes and Erie, even though it cannot possibly buy them. Pennsylvania coal, however, is not the only restriction. Consumption, however, is the chief obstacle to the coal trade.

The abrogation of the treaty also gives the Canadian opportunity to discover herself. Even the largest towns along the border were of little value to the United States, and the municipalities were either surrounded by farms on the side of the border, agricultural and commerce had scarcely and facilities for its own expansion. The foreign trade of Canada, however, was an embarrassment to the wealth out of the way.

The situation is not yet bad enough to force the provinces to be divided geographically, politically, and socially. As far as we are concerned, the situation is not as bad as it appears to give to them the most unrestricted freedom as to the continuation of their trade with the United States.

It has been always his intention also from the beginning, to separate from the Latin church, and distinct and separate from the property of the parishes of the Latin church, these three parishes, and to give them a legal and real recognition by these new enactments of the Legislature of Alberta. It is expected that the church of the Latin church will be the first to be separated from the Latin church, and that it will be the first to be separated from the Latin church.

A Friend of the Rutherfordians, Edmonton, April 24.

THE SIN OF THE BIG HAT.

Editor Daily Bulletin:—Your Sunday paper to sit in the pews of one or other of the churches in Edmonton, and the people who are not members of the church, to a point of mind and conductive to a pious and peaceful frame of mind, to sit behind rows of hats, and to be compelled to come into contact with them to make the devout groan and the undevout swear.

The ministers of the city are aware of the fact that the of the field board of the First Methodist Church of Edmonton (H. J. Corbin) resolution last week requiring all women to remove their hats on entering the church, has been adopted.

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